

Message Text

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70

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 NIC-01 /080 W

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R 240030Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL MELBOURNE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2649

INFO AMCONSUL BRISBANE BY POUCH

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMCONSUL PERTH BY POUCH

AMCONSUL SYDNEY

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AS, PINT

SUBJECT: FRASER'S VICTORY

1. REACTION OF FRASER SUPPORTERS IN MELBOURNE TO FRASER'S
OVERWHELMING VICTORY IN LEADERSHIP RACE FOR CONTROL OF
LIBERAL PARTY CAN BEST BE DESCRIBED AS JUBILANT. SNEDDEN
SUPPORTERS NATURALLY DOWNCAST ALTHOUGH MANY OF THEM
PRIVATELY ADMIT THAT SNEDDEN WAS NOT EFFECTIVE LEADER.
THEY FEAR THAT
FRASER WILL PROVE TOO RIGHT WING TO ATTRACT MIDDLE
GROUND VOTERS AWAY FROM LABOR PARTY.

2. I HAD CREIGHTON BURNS, POLITICAL COMMENTATOR FOR MELBOURNE
AGE TO LUNCH FRIDAY. HE SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE GREATLY FAVORED
SNEDDEN AND HAD ACTUALLY BELIEVED HE WOULD WIN OVER FRASER
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HE HAD TO ADMIT THAT SNEDDEN WOULD NEVER HAVE LED LIBERAL

PARTY TO VICTORY OVER WHITLAM. HE ADMITTED HE WAS LONG-TIME FRIEND OF SNEDDEN AND DISLIKED AND MISTRUSTS FRASER. I ASKED HIM WHETHER FRASER, NOW ELECTED LEADER, WOULD MOVE TOWARDS CENTER. HE SAID FRASER WOULD TRY TO DO THIS AND HE THOUGHT WOULD PROBABLY SUCCEED ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE HARD FOR FRASER'S PSYCHOLOGY AND EMOTIONS WHICH WERE VERY CONSERVATIVE. HE THOUGHT FRASER DANGER WOULD BE TREATING HIS HERETOFORE ENEMIES TOO HARD. IF FRASER DID THIS HE WOULD PERMANENTLY ALIENATE FORMER SNEDDEN SUPPORTERS AND WOULD FAIL AS LEADER. IF FRASER WAS MORE ABLE HE WOULD MKE OVER THE PARTY AND WOULD WITHOUT ANY DOUBT RUN IT. WITH REGARD TO COUNTRY PARTY BURNS THOUGHT FRASER WOULD BE MUCH LESS SUBJECT TO PRESSURE THAN SNEDDEN HAD BEEN AND WOULD CERTAINLY FAVOR PASSING THE ELECTORAL REFORM BILL, PARTICULARLY SINCE IN OPPOSITION LIBERAL PARTY HAD LITTLE TO GAIN FROM PLACATING COUNTRY PARTY LEADERS.

3. BURNS PREDICTED THAT DEPUTY PARTY LEADER PHILLIP LYNCH, WHO HAD OFFENDED BOTH SIDES IN RECENT CONTEST, WOULD BE KEPT ON UNTIL NEXT ELECTION BUT THEN REPLACED. HE THOUGHT FRASER MIGHT WELL FORM STRONG ALLIANCE BY HAVING ANDREW PEACOCK AS DEPUTY PARTY LEADER AT THAT TIME. WITH REGARD TO TIMING BURNS SAID FIRMLY THAT THE LIBERAL'S DON'T WANT TO PRECIPITATE ELECTION "FOR SOME TIME" WHILE THEY HOPEFULLY GOT THEIR HOUSE BACK IN ORDER. WHITLAM WOULD HAVE MORE REASON TO WANT ELECTION SOON BUT BURNS DID NOT BELIEVE HE WOULD MAKE THIS MOVE EITHER.
BRAND

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